

Organizing Persuasive Speeches and Essays Lesson Plan

Subject Areas: English/Language Arts and Social Studies

Grade Levels: 6 – 12 (ages 11-18)

Time: At least three 45-minute class periods; time outside of class as necessary.

Lesson Objective:

Students will be better able to plan and compose persuasive speeches or essays.

Common Core State Standards¹:

Writing Standards for Grades 6-12 in English Language Arts & Literacy, History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects:

Standard 1. Write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts, using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence.

Standard 4. Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization and style are appropriate to task, purpose and audience.

Standard 6. Use technology, including the Internet, to produce and publish writing and to interact and collaborate with others.

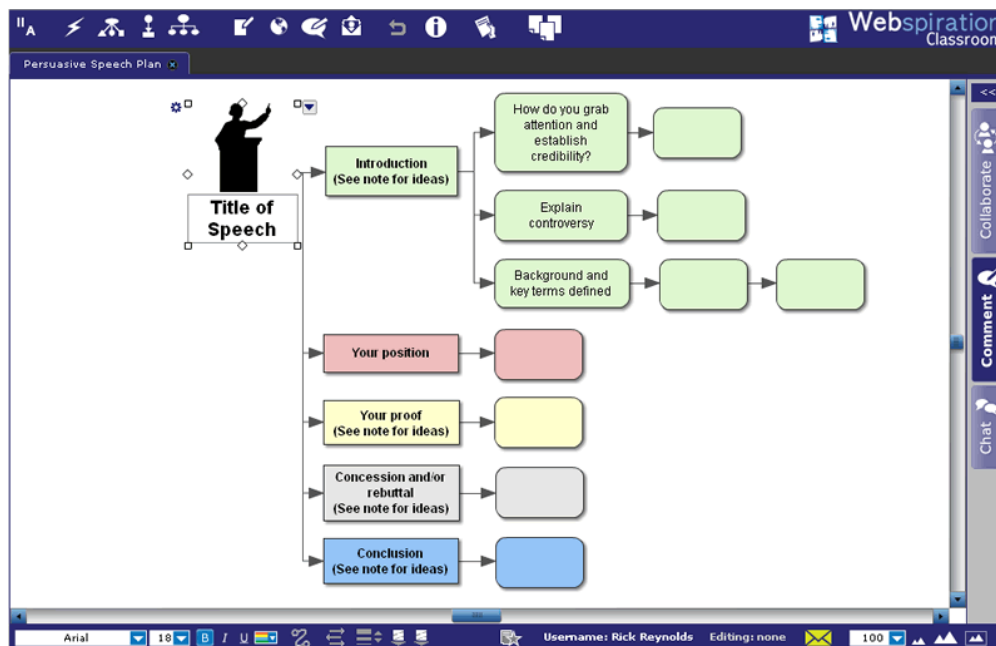
Listening and Speaking Standards for Grades 6-12 in English Language Arts & Literacy, History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects:

Standard 4. Present information, findings and supporting evidence so that listeners can follow the line of reasoning and the organization, development and style are appropriate to task, purpose and audience.

Standard 5. Make strategic use of digital media and visual displays of data to express information and enhance understanding of presentations. (Option)

Overview:

Public speaking is one of the most challenging tasks for many students. Fortunately, some of the anxiety can be reduced when students know they are organized and prepared, and the *Persuasive Speech Plan* template will help students do just that (**Webspiration Classroom™ Starter>Starter Docs>English Language Arts>Persuasive Speech**). The template can also be used to organize a persuasive essay, as explained in the **Adaptations / Extensions** section below.

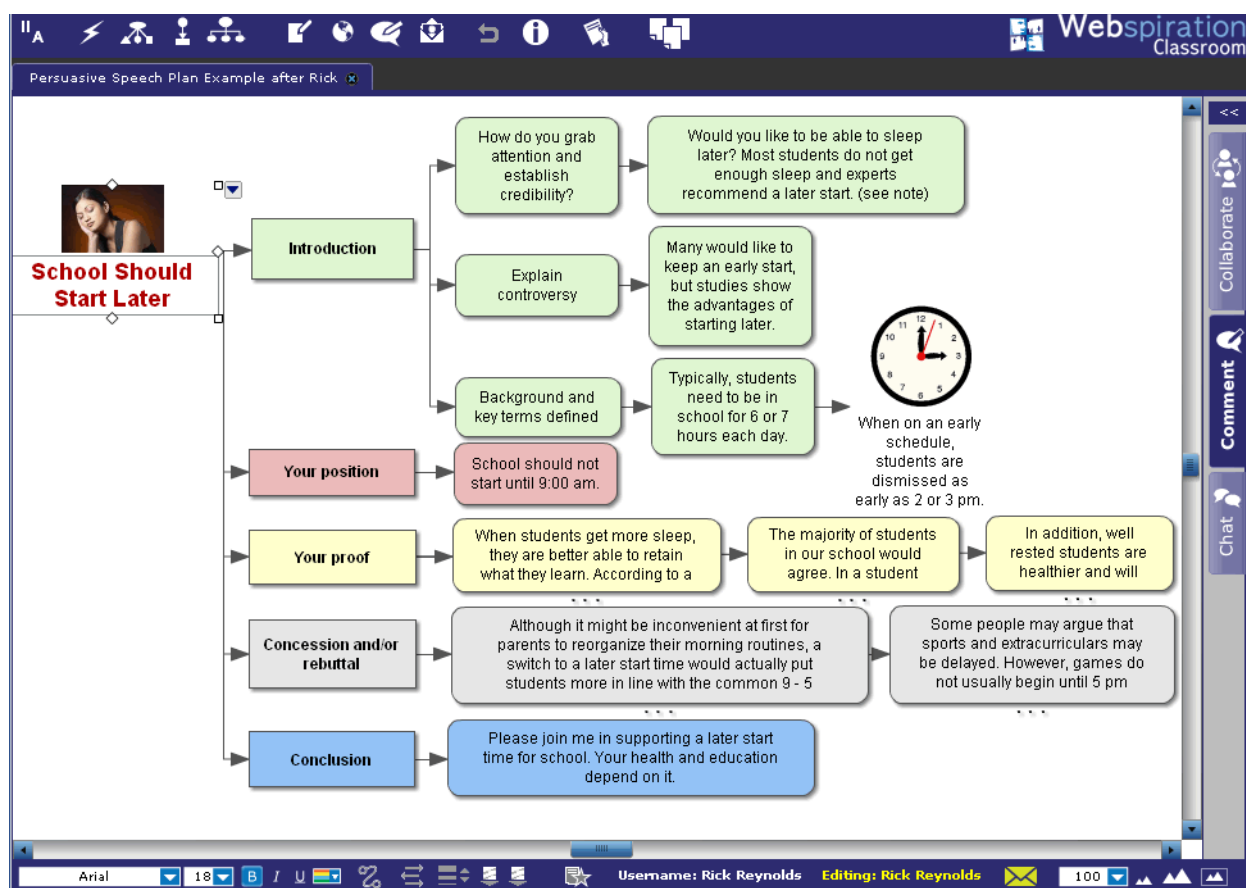


Preparation:

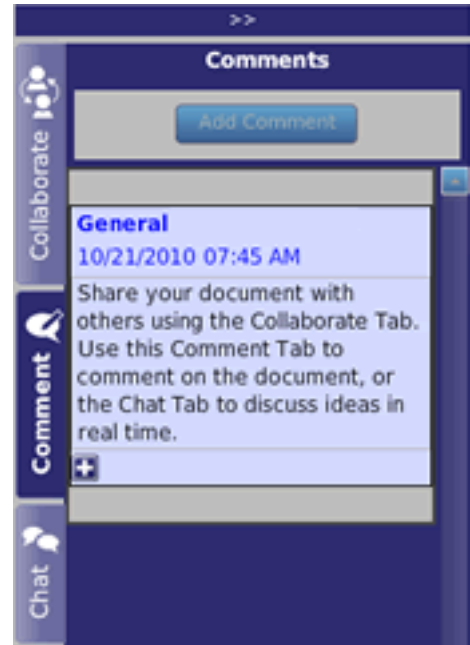
- This lesson requires Internet access and the Webspiration Classroom software application published by Inspiration® Software, Inc. It can be accessed by visiting <http://www.webspirationclassroom.com>.
- Access to library resources would also be helpful for student research.

Lesson:

1. Explain that Webspiration Classroom offers many tools and templates to help with the writing process, including the *Persuasive Speech Plan* template they will be using today. Open it and explain the areas of the template to the students. Be sure students understand that they will first develop this plan and then compose the entire speech before they finally deliver it. Specify whether they will need to practice delivering their speeches from note cards, from an outline or from memory. If you would like students to use visuals as suggested in Standard 5 of the Listening and Speaking Standards, make your expectations clear.
2. Open the *Persuasive Speech Plan Example (Webspiration Classroom Starter>Examples>English Language Arts>Persuasive Speech Plan Example)* so students have an idea of a finished diagram. Be sure to point out the wording of the concession and rebuttal example, as this step is often quite challenging for students. Explain that acknowledging the opposition's viewpoint and forcefully arguing against it is one of the strongest persuasive strategies they can use.



3. Prewriting: Have your students select controversial topics. Then they can brainstorm ideas and record preliminary research about it in the blank area to the side of the diagram using the **RapidFire®** tool. It is important for students to do this preliminary research using library resources or the Internet to ensure there is ample evidence to support their positions. They can paste Internet addresses which have valuable information into this brainstorming area for later use.
4. Once students have completed this prewriting, they are ready to develop a position statement. Explain to them that a position statement is normally one sentence that states what one will attempt to argue in the speech.
5. Explain that throughout the prewriting and writing process students should obtain feedback from the teacher and their peers using the collaboration tools. Documents can be shared with others using the **Collaborate** tab. The **Comment** tab can be used to comment on the document, or the **Chat** tab can be used, if it is turned on at your school, to discuss ideas in real time. This collaboration will be particularly useful as students write their concessions and rebuttals. Peers can raise counter-arguments to each other's positions which must then be logically rebutted.
6. Students can complete the diagrams and go to **Outline View** to finish organizing their speeches. Be sure to emphasize that they should keep a careful record of the sources they use for a works cited or bibliography.
7. After students have organized their work in outline form, they can download their project to Inspiration® or a word processor, or transfer it to a Google Doc. There they may complete their speech drafts for eventual transfer to note cards or for memorization. They could also deliver their speeches directly from **Outline View**.



Adaptations / Extensions:

- This lesson can be easily adapted to be a persuasive essay assignment. Just be sure to point out that written essays are usually more formal than speeches. Therefore, students should avoid the first and second person. A formal works cited and parenthetical documentation also become that much more important.
- This lesson can be used in any content area that requires students to speak or write persuasively.

¹ © Copyright 2010. National Governors Association Center for Best Practices and Council of Chief State School Officers. All rights reserved. Learn more online at <<http://www.corestandards.org>>.